

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 11443 200701Z

14

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2090

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AMECONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOV, PINS, PINT, NI

SUBJECT: PURGE OF CIVIL SERVANTS GOES ON UNBATED;

UNIVERSITIES NOW HIT

REF: A. LAGOS 9656 B. LAGOS 9324 C. LAGOS 8988

D. LAGOS 8161 E. LAGOS 8028 F. LAGOS 11238

G. LAGOS 10101. ALL NOTAL

SUMMARY: FMG'S DRIVE RID NIGERIA'S BUREAUCRACY OF DEAD WOOD GOES ON UNABATED. OVER 9,000 PERSONS HAVE BEEN RETIRED OR DISMISSED BY FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS AND PUBLIC CORPORATIONS SINCE REGIME OF BRIG. MUHAMMED SEIZED POWER JULY 29. LATEST INSTITUTIONS TO COME UNDER KNIFE ARE UNIVERSITIES, WHERE OVER 700 SUDDENLY OUT OF JOBS, INCLUDING UNIBADAN VICE-CHANCELLOR H. O. THOMAS. PUBLIC APPROVAL OF PURGE MIXED WITH ANXIETY THAT FUNCTIONING OF COWED BUREAUCRACY WILL BE DANGEROUSLY IMPAIRED. NO CLEAR SIGNS AS YET THAT PURGE IS ENDING, BUT FMG MAY BE READY TO BEGIN TAPERING OFF. END SUMMARY.

1. TOTAL OF PERSONS RETIRED OR DISMISSED FROM PUBLIC SECTOR SINCE JULY 29 COUP, OR LET GO WHEN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS DISBANDED (E.G. NATIONAL CENSUS BOARD) NOW EXCEEDS 9,000. MID-WESTERN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 11443 200701Z

STATE LOPPED OFF 800 NOVEMBER 18; NORTH WESTERN STATE 677. AL-

THOUGH VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE SACKED ARE MINOR OFFICIALS--
GUARDS, MESSENGERS, MECHANICS, TYPISTS, GARDENERS, ETC.--
DISMISSALS FROM HIGHER RANKS NOW NUMBER IN HUNDREDS, INCLUDING
FIVE FEDERAL PERMANENT SECRETARIES (REFC), HIGH COURT JUSTICES AND
CHIEF JUSTICE ELIAS (REF D),
UNNUMEROUS STATE PERMANENT SECRETARIES (INCLUDING EIGHT IN SOUTH
EASTERN STATE AND TWO IN KWARA STATE LAST WEEK), AT LEAST 94
SENIOR POLICE OFFICERS (REF D), NINE AMBASSADORS (REFS C AND E),
AND IMPORTANT OFFICIALS IN COMMUNICATIONS (REF C).

2. UNIVERSITIES CAME UNDER KNIFE NOVEMBER 13, WHEN 150 WERE
RETIRED OR DISMISSED FROM UNILAG, INCLUDING FOUR PROFESSORS, ONE
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, FIVE SENIOR LECTURERS AND THREE LECTURERS.
THESE WERE FOLLOWED BY 36 AT UNIFE, AND 57 AT UNIBEN, PLUS 140
AT ABU. ON NOVEMBER 17 AXE HIT UNIBADAN, WITH 354 RETIREMENTS
OR DISMISSALS, INCLUDING PROF. HORATIO ORTSEJOLOMI
THOMAS, THE VICE-CHANCELLER, FOR "CONDUCT UNBECOMING OF A HOLDER
OF HIGH OFFICE IN NIGERIA'S HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION"
(SIC). GREAT MAJORITY OF THOSE FIRED AT UNIBADAN ARE SMALL FRY;
PORTERS, CLERKS, STORES ASSISTANTS. ASIDE FROM THOMAS MOST
NOTEWORTHY RETIREE IS DEPUTY REGISTRAR S.A.O. ODUMUYE.
AT KADUNA POLYTECHNIC 60 LOST JOBS AS PART OF
PURGE OF INTERIM COMMON SERVICES AGENCY. (ICSA PURGE TOTAL
THUS FAR IS 157).

3. MOST OBSERVERS DISCOUNT NOTION THAT FOR EVERY PERSON
FIRED THERE ARE SEVERAL BITTER RELATIVES AND OTHER HANGERS-ON.,
THAT SACKINGS ARE CREATING VAST ARMY OF ENEMIES FOR FMG. THEY
POINT TO SPEED WITH WHICH NIGERIAN SYCOPANTS DESERT THE FALLEN
AND SEEK NEW BENEFACTORS, AND INDICATE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN FIRED
ARE GLAD TO GET AWAY ON SUCH GENEROUS TERMS AND NOT LIKELY ASK
FOR TROUBLE BY RAISING OBJECTIONS. ALTHOUGH CLEANSING OPERATION
HAS FOR MOST PART BEEN WELCOMED BY NIGERIAN PUBLIC, WHO HAVE
SEEN MANY THEY KNEW TO BE CORRUPT AND INEFFICIENT GET THEIR
COMEUPPANCE, INFORMED OPINION SEEMS TO HOLD THAT EXERCISE HAS GONE
FAR ENOUGH, OTHERWISE THERE WILL BE DANGER OF PARALYSIS IN
FEDERAL AND STATE BUREAUCRACIES. WESTERN STATE CIVIL SERVICE,
HAVING LOST OVER 1500 TO FORCED RETIREMENTS, REPORTED DEMORALIZED
BY ROUGH AND READY NEW GOVERNOR JEMIBEWON. EMBASSY RECEIVING
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PAGE 03 LAGOS 11443 200701Z

INDICATIONS THAT FMG, AFTER ONE PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT PURGE
WOULD BE ENDING (REF B), MAY AT LAST BE NEARING END OF
EXERCISE, THAT SACKINGS FROM UNIVERSITIES AND WEEDING OUT OF
UNWANTED FROM ARMED FORCES (REF F) MAY REPRESENT LAST PHASES
OF ORGANIZED PURGE. ANNOUNCEMENT FROM KWARA STATE NOVEMBER 18.
SAID THAT DAY'S DISMISSALS (26) MARKED END OF "MOJOR" PURGES
IN STATE PUBLIC SERVICE.

4. COMMENT: IF NEW BLOOD CAN NOT BE TRANSFUSED INTO
PUBLIC SERVICE PERFORMANCE OUGHT TO IMPROVE. DECLINE IN
CORRUPTION, EVEN IF TEMPORARY, SHOULD ALSO IMPROVE
PERFORMANCE. MORALE MAY REBOUND WHEN CONSCIENTIOUS CIVIL
SERVANTS SEE THAT THEY HAVE ESCAPED PURGE AND BY IMPLICATION
BEEN GIVEN VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. UNFOLDING CEMENT SCANDAL HAS
SHOWN, HOWEVER, THAT THOSE WHO ESCAPED FIRST ROUND OF SACKINGS
DO NOT THEREBY BECOME IMMUNE TO NEW PROBES: FMG'S NEWLY
APPOINTED HIGH COMMISSIONER TO UK AND FORMER AMBASSADOR TO
NETHERLANDS, (REF G), ALHAJI AHMADU SUKA, IN LAGOS TESTIFY
REGARDING SOME ALLEGEDLY SHADY DEALS, HAS BEEN ORDERED NOT
LEAVE NIGERIA. END COMMENT.
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